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Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 REYKJA 00533 181544 Z

66-61
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 /026 W
---------- 101838
R 181440 Z MAY 73
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3613
INFO USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T REYKJAVIK 0533

EXDIS

DEPT PLS PASS SECDEF AND USLOSACLANT

E. O. 11652: GDS 12/31/81
TAGS: MARR IC
SUBJECT: IDF RETENTION ISSUE

REF: USNATO 2346

1. REFTEL GENERALLY JIBES WITH INFORMATION KNOWN HERE WITH EXCEPTION PARA 5. WE ARE PUZZLED BY TOMASSON' S INTERPRETATION OF ARTICLE VII. THE AGREEMENT DOES NOT GIVE NAC SIX MONTHS TO DELIBERATE. AS INTERPRETED BY ICELAND' S MFA AND BY IDF JUDGE ADVOCATE' S OFFICE, IT GIVES THE USG AND GOI SIX MONTHS TO REACH AN AGREEMENT FROM THE DATE OF THE FORMAL REQUEST TO NAC. IF NO AGREEMENT IS REACHED WITHIN THAT SIX- MONTH PERIOD, GOI MAY ANY TIME THEREAFTER GIVE NOTICE OF TERMINATION, IN WHICH CASE ALL MILITARY FORCES MUST BE REMOVED WITHIN 12 MONTHS FROM DATE OF NOTICE. IN OTHER WORDS, THE AGREEMENT TECHNICALLY PROVIDES ONLY SIX MONTHS FOR WORKING OUT AN AGREEMENT AND NOT THE 18 MONTHS TOMASSON RELATES. OF COURSE, THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT DOES NOT PRECLUDE NEGOTIATIONS DURING THE 12 MONTH PERIOD IN

WHICH TO REACH A NEW AGREEMENT, BUT DURING THAT PERIOD IDF MUST MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO WITHDRAW. OUR INTERPRETATION IS REINFORCED BY FONMIN AGUSTSSON' S ACTION LAST WEEK (REYKJAVIK TEL 0509) IN GIVING USG ONE MONTH' S INFORMAL ADVANCE NOTICE, WHICH HE THEN REMARKED WILL GIVE US "7 MONTHS TO WORK OUT A NEW AGREEMENT."
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ALSO, THE GOVT' S PLATFORM STATES, " THE AIM SHALL BE TO HAVE THE DEPARTURE OF THE DEFENSE FORCE TAKE PLACE DURING THE ELECTION TERM." THIS HAS BEEN GENERALLY INTERPRETED HERE TO MEAN THAT IF THE GOVT WANTS THE IDF TO WITHDRAW IN ACCORDANCE WITH TERMS OF THE PLATFORM, IT MUST INVOKE ARTICLE VII BY DEC 1, 1973 AND GIVE THE 12- MONTH SUBSEQUENT TERMINATION NOTICE ON JUNE 1, 1974. THE LIFE OF THE GOVT TERMINATES JUNE 1, 1975.

2. PERHAPS TOMASSON IS CONFUSING AN INTENTION BY FONMIN AGUSTSSON AND THE ACTUAL TERMS OF THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT. ABOUT A MONTH AGO WHEN AGUSTSSON SPRANG THE SURPRISE OF INVOKING ART VII, AGUSTSSON TOLD US HE WOULD NOT BE A STICKLER FOR AN EXACT SIX MONTHS. IF IT LOOKED LIKE A NEW AGREEMENT WAS NEAR, HE WOULD STRETCH THE SIX MONTHS TO SEVEN OR EIGHT. HE WOULD THEN COUNT ON A TWO TO THREE MONTH ALTHING DEBATE THEREAFTER. THIS WOULD THEN GIVE HIM ENOUGH TIME TO INVOKE THE 12- MONTH TERMINATION CLAUSE, IF NECESSARY, STILL WITHIN THE TIME FRAME OUTLINED BY THE PLATFORM DECLARATION. THERE IS NO REASON TO BELIEVE, BASED ON RECENT EXPERIENCE, THAT THE COMMUNISTS WILL LET AGUSTSSON DRAG HIS FEET ONCE ART VII IS INVOKED. IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO LEARN, BUT ONLY IF IT CAN BE DONE DISCREETLY, WHETHER TOMASSON' S INTERPRETATION IS HIS OWN OR CONVEYED TO HIM BY THE MFA. WE HAVE EVIDENCE THAT THE FONMIN IS MISLEADING PRO- IDF ALTHING MEMBERS BY INTIMATING ART VII IS ONLY A PROCEDURAL STEP WHICH MUST BE INVOKED IN ORDER TO INITIATE RENEGOTIATION TALKS WITH USG. WE ALSO HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE TOMASSON HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO PLAY DOWN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INVOKING ART VII.

3. WITH REGARD TO NATO' S STUDY REFERRED TO IN PARA 5, WE ARE NOT AT ALL SURE GOI INTENDS TO ACCEPT ANOTHER REPORT FROM NATO. IN FONMIN' S FOREIGN POLICY
SPEECH IN ALTHING APRIL 12, AGUSTSSON STATED HE HAD ALREADY RECEIVED REPORT FROM " NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL".

4. WORD IS LEAKING OUT OF PROGRESS PARTY CIRCLES THAT FONMIN INTENDS INVOKE ART VII SOON. THREE PROMINENT MEMBERS OF INDEPENDENCE PARTY (LARGEST AND MOST PRO- IDF PARTY IN ALTHING OPPOSITION) ADVISED US OF THIS YESTERDAY ON ASSUMPTION WE WERE NOT AWARE OF IT, AND CAUTIONED US NOT TO COUNT ON BEING SAVED
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BY THE ALTHING MAJORITY. THEY SAID NO DOUBT OF OUTCOME IF ALTHING VOTE TAKEN TODAY. THEY WOULD NOT PREDICT OUTCOME SIX OR EIGHT MONTHS FROM NOW BECAUSE OF THE SPLINTERING GOING ON IN THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY AND THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY. THE LATTER IS THE OTHER OPPOSITION PARTY. OUR THREE INFORMANTS STATE THAT SOME CURRENT SUPPORTERS OF IDF IN ALTHING MAY BARGAIN AWAY THE IDF FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL GAIN.

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5. WE STILL BELIEVE SITUATION CALLS FOR CONCERN ON OUR PART.
IRVING

NOTE BY OCT: NOT PASSED SECDEF AND USLOSACLANT.

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